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Provincial Museum of Alberta

A CHECKLIST OF THE MAMMALS OF ALBERTA

Natural History Occasional Paper No. 6

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by

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Prepared for:

Provincial Museum of Alberta

Published by:

Alberta Culture

Historical Resources Division

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Several people have assisted me in the preparation of this checklist either by reading early drafts or by supplying suggestions. Drs. J. Burns, W. Fuller, and B. McGillivray read the drafts and made many useful comments. Dr. P. Stepney encouraged me to proceed with the project and supported its publication. Colleen Steinhilber typed the manuscript. Ludo Bogaert drew the cover illustration and his work is greatly appreciated.

INTRODUCTION

This checklist has been prepared to provide a ready reference to the common and scientific names currently applied to the ninety species of mammals recorded for Alberta. A species is included in this checklist on the basis of a verified specimen record. Since the publication of the Mammals of Alberta (Soper 1964), several changes have occurred in the nomenclature of Alberta's mammals. As well, recent taxonomic studies have resulted in changes in the classification of some species. This checklist reflects these changes. In preparing this checklist I have followed the arrangement and nomenclature of Jones et al. (1982). Where I differ from their names, or where new names have been published, I have provided an explanation.

SHREWS

Van Zyll de Jong (1980) demonstrated that *Sorex cinereus* and *Sorex haydeni* are separate species, and Junge and Hoffmann (1981) concurred with this assessment. The common name "Prairie Shrew" was used by van Zyll de Jong (1983) for *Sorex haydeni* and is the name I use in this checklist. The name Hayden's Shrew is equally appropriate (Junge and Hoffmann 1981). Jones et al. (1982) do not recognize *Sorex haydeni*.

I use the common name "Masked Shrew" for *Sorex cinereus* because it has been known by that name in Alberta. Van Zyll de Jong (1983) uses the name "Common Shrew" for this animal, which, though appropriate, could result in confusion because "Common Shrew" is used for *Sorex araneus* of the Palearctic (Corbet 1978).

BATS

Van Zyll de Jong (1979, 1984) has shown that *Myotis keenii* and *Myotis septentrionalis* and *Myotis leibii* and *Myotis ciliolabrum* are separate species. For the two species that occur in Alberta, van Zyll de Jong (1985) coined the common names "Northern Long-eared Bat" for *Myotis septentrionalis* and "Western Small-footed Bat" for *Myotis ciliolabrum*.

Jones et al. (1982) use the name Myotis in the common name of the *Myotis* bats. Because Myotis is not familiar to most lay persons, I have retained use of the term "Bat."

RODENTS

The taxonomic designation of rodents is unsettled; no consensus has been achieved in the assignment of species to families. Examples of this are evident in the works of Hall (1981), Honacki et al. (1982), and Anderson and Jones (1984). The mammals that are found in Alberta belong to seven families according to Hall (1981) and Anderson and Jones (1984) or to nine families according to Honacki et al. (1982). Disagreements occur in the classification of the cricetids, microtines, and murids. Hall (1981) and Anderson and Jones (1984) group them under one family: Muridae, Honacki et al. (1982) separate them into three families: Cricetidae, Arvicolidae, and Muridae. The family name for the jumping mice, genus *Zapus*, is also in dispute. Hall (1981) and Honacki et al. (1982) use the name Zapodidae while Anderson and Jones (1984) use the name Dipodidae.

In this checklist I retain the family names Cricetidae, Muridae, and Zapodidae for the sake of simplicity and familiarity.

I use the generic name *Eutamias* rather than *Tamias* for the chipmunks. Nadler et al. (1977) argued that *Tamias* should be applied to the western North American chipmunks, but Ellis and Maxon (1979) did not agree. Again, because its use is familiar and there is no consensus on this name, I continue to use *Eutamias*.

I have included the Brown Lemming, *Lemmus sibiricus*, on the basis of a specimen recently obtained in Alberta (Smith and Edmonds 1985). I omit from the list the White-footed Mouse, *Peromyscus leucopus*, because specimens from the province that were identified as that species have, on re-examination, been referred to *Peromyscus maniculatus* (van Zyll de Jong, personal communication).

CARNIVORES

I follow Jones et al. (1982) in the use of names for most carnivores, but I differ from them in the family Felidae. Jones et al. (1982) use the generic name *Felis* for all North American species in the family. Because there is considerable disagreement with respect to the taxonomy of cats, I use *Felis* for Cougar and *Lynx* for the Canada Lynx and Bobcat. I use the common name "Cougar" rather than "Mountain Lion" because these animals are found outside montane regions, and it is a name that is used and understood in Alberta. I use the name "Canada Lynx" to differentiate the North American species from the Eurasian Lynx, *Lynx lynx*.

Van Zyll de Jong (1972) used the generic name *Lontra* for the New World river otters. Jones et al. (1973) used this name in an earlier checklist, but in subsequent checklists returned to the name *Lutra* citing

Sokolov's (1973) study (Jones et al. 1975, 1982). Recently, Kellnhauser (1983) indicated that Sokolov (1973) made no reference to van Zyll de Jong's (1972) use of the name *Lontra* and that *Lontra* is a valid generic name for New World river otters. I have not had an opportunity to study Sokolov's (1973) paper, and I am not able to assess Kellnhauser's (1982) arguments. I am, therefore, being conservative and continue to use the name *Lutra*.

BOVIDS

Jones et al. (1982) use the common name "Mountain Sheep" for *Ovis canadensis*. In this checklist, I use the common name "Bighorn Sheep" for the same species. Although "Mountain Sheep" is descriptive of the habitat in which these animals are found, it is not exclusive to them because Dall Sheep, *Ovis dalli*, are also mountain dwellers. "Bighorn Sheep" is more applicable with respect to the massive horns of *Ovis canadensis* rams which can not be confused with the thin horns of *Ovis dalli*.

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Class: Mammalia

Order: INSECTIVORA (Shrews)

Family: SORICIDAE

Sorex cinereus . . . . . Masked Shrew

Sorex haydeni . . . . . Prairie Shrew

Sorex monticolus . . . . . Dusky Shrew

Sorex palustris . . . . . Water Shrew

Sorex arcticus . . . . . Arctic Shrew

Sorex hoyi . . . . . Pygmy Shrew

Order: CHIROPTERA (Bats)

Family: VESPERTILIONIDAE

Myotis lucifugus . . . . . Little Brown Bat

Myotis septentrionalis . . . . . Northern Long-eared Bat

Myotis evotis . . . . . Long-eared Bat

Myotis volans . . . . . Long-legged Bat

Myotis ciliolabrum . . . . . Western Small-footed Bat

Lasionycteris noctivagans . . . Silver-haired Bat

Eptesicus fuscus . . . . . Big Brown Bat

Lasiurus borealis . . . . . Red Bat

Lasiurus cinereus . . . . . Hoary Bat

Order: LAGOMORPHA (Pikas, Rabbits, and Hares)

Family: OCHOTONIDAE

Ochotona princeps . . . . . Pika

Order: LAGOMORPHA (Pikas, Rabbits, and Hares) - cont'd

Family: LEPORIDAE

Sylvilagus nuttallii . . . . . Nuttall's Cottontail

Lepus americanus . . . . . Snowshoe Hare

Lepus townsendii . . . . . White-tailed Jack Rabbit

Order: RODENTIA (Rodents)

Family: SCIURIDAE

Eutamias minimus . . . . . Least Chipmunk

Eutamias amoenus . . . . . Yellow-pine Chipmunk

Eutamias ruficaudus . . . . . Red-tailed Chipmunk

Marmota monax . . . . . Woodchuck

Marmota flaviventris . . . . . Yellow-bellied Marmot

Marmota caligata . . . . . Hoary Marmot

Spermophilus richardsonii . . . Richardson's Ground Squirrel

Spermophilus columbianus . . . . Columbian Ground Squirrel

Spermophilus tridecemlineatus . Thirteen-lined Ground Squirrel

Spermophilus franklinii . . . . Franklin's Ground Squirrel

Spermophilus lateralis . . . . . Golden-mantled Ground Squirrel

Sciurus carolinensis . . . . . Gray Squirrel

Tamiasciurus hudsonicus . . . . Red Squirrel

Glaucomys sabrinus . . . . . Northern Flying Squirrel

Family: GEOMYIDAE

Thomomys talpoides . . . . . Northern Pocket Gopher

Order: RODENTIA (Rodents) - cont'd

Family: HETEROMYIDAE

Perognathus fasciatus . . . . . Olive-backed Pocket Mouse

Dipodomys ordii . . . . . Ord's Kangaroo Rat

Family: CASTORIDAE

Castor canadensis . . . . . Beaver

Family: CRICETIDAE

Reithrodontomys megalotis . . . Western Harvest Mouse

Peromyscus maniculatus . . . . . Deer Mouse

Onychomys leucogaster . . . . . Northern Grasshopper Mouse

Neotoma cinerea . . . . . Bushy-tailed Woodrat

Clethrionomys gapperi . . . . . Southern Red-backed Vole

Phenacomys intermedius . . . . . Heather Vole

Microtus pennsylvanicus . . . . Meadow Vole

Microtus longicaudus . . . . . Long-tailed Vole

Microtus xanthognathus . . . . . Yellow-cheeked Vole

Microtus ochrogaster . . . . . Prairie Vole

Microtus richardsoni . . . . . Water Vole

Lagurus curtatus . . . . . Sagebrush Vole

Ondatra zibethicus . . . . . Muskrat

Lemmus sibiricus . . . . . Brown Lemming

Synaptomys borealis . . . . . Northern Bog Lemming

Family: MURIDAE

Rattus rattus . . . . . Black Rat

Rattus norvegicus . . . . . Norway Rat

Mus musculus . . . . . House Mouse

Order: RODENTIA (Rodents) - cont'd

Family: ZAPODIDAE

Zapus hudsonius . . . . . Meadow Jumping Mouse

Zapus princeps . . . . . Western Jumping Mouse

Family: ERETHIZONTIDAE

Erethizon dorsatum . . . . . Porcupine

Order: CARNIVORA (Carnivores)

Family: CANIDAE

Canis latrans . . . . . Coyote

Canis lupus . . . . . Gray Wolf

Alopex lagopus . . . . . Arctic Fox

Vulpes vulpes . . . . . Red Fox

Vulpes velox . . . . . Swift Fox

Urocyon cinereoargenteus . . . . Gray Fox

Family: URSIDAE

Ursus americanus . . . . . Black Bear

Ursus arctos . . . . . Grizzly Bear

Family: PROCYONIDAE

Procyon lotor . . . . . Raccoon

Family: MUSTELIDAE

Martes americana . . . . . Marten

Martes pennanti . . . . . Fisher

Mustela erminea . . . . . Ermine

Mustela nivalis . . . . . Least Weasel

Mustela frenata . . . . . Long-tailed Weasel

Order: CARNIVORA (Carnivores) - cont'd

Family: MUSTELIDAE

Mustela nigripes . . . . . Black-footed Ferret

Mustela vison . . . . . Mink

Gulo gulo . . . . . Wolverine

Taxidea taxus . . . . . Badger

Mephitis mephitis . . . . . Striped Skunk

Lutra canadensis . . . . . River Otter

Family: FELIDAE

Felis concolor . . . . . Cougar

Lynx canadensis . . . . . Canada Lynx

Lynx rufus . . . . . Bobcat

Order: ARTIODACTYLA (Deer, Pronghorn, Bovids)

Family: CERVIDAE

Cervus elaphus . . . . . Wapiti

Odocoileus hemionus . . . . . Mule Deer

Odocoileus virginianus . . . . . White-tailed Deer

Alces alces . . . . . Moose

Rangifer tarandus . . . . . Caribou

Family: ANTILOCAPRIDAE

Antilocapra americana . . . . . Pronghorn

Family: BOVIDAE

Bison bison . . . . . Bison

Oreamnos americanus . . . . . Mountain Goat

Ovis canadensis . . . . . Bighorn Sheep